

**County of San Diego
Valle De Oro Community Planning Group
P.O. Box 936
La Mesa, CA 91944-0936**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: September 20, 2011

LOCATION: Otay Water District Headquarters
Training Room, Lower Terrace
2554 Sweetwater Springs Blvd.
Spring Valley, California 91978-2004

1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM Jack L. Phillips, presiding Chair

Members present: Brownlee, Feathers, Fitchett, Forthun, Henderson, Manning, Mitrovich, Myers, Phillips, Schuppert, Tierney (not yet confirmed)

Absent: Hyatt, Millar, Reith, Wollitz

2. FINALIZE AGENDA: As shown

3. OPEN FORUM: None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of Sept. 6, 2011 **VOTE: 8-0-3** to approve.
Abstained: Forthun, Mitrovich, Tierney

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Calavo Drive Culvert Replacement: Request by County DPW staff to reconsider the Planning Group's previous rejection of the project. The culvert proposed for replacement crosses under Calavo immediately south of Louisa Dr.

FITCHETT presented. At our meeting of January 18th of this year this Planning Group voted that the existing culvert under Calavo Drive NOT be replaced. Public testimony questioned the justification for replacing the culvert as in 40+ years of memory, which included significant rain storms, the capacity of the existing culvert has never been exceeded. Since that January meeting, the County DPW has published 2 revisions to the Calavo Drainage Study. He asked the applicants if they had new information to justify this culvert replacement project.

Terry Rayback, the Capital Improvements Manager of DPW, stated that they incorporated all of our Planning Group's recommended changes. The County is upgrading the road to the 100 year flood due to a liability avoidance issue. Mohamad Fakhrriddine discussed comments on the technical portion of the project including criteria and calculations dealing with volumes of water. He stated that the Planning Group found some errors, however, even when they were corrected it did not change the need for the culvert although they were able to downsize it and save money.

FITCHETT then presented his Sub-committee Report: It appears that the purpose of the drainage study performed by the DPW's consultant was to calculate a flow rate so large that the existing culvert could not pass it and the water would back up and eventually over-top the road. Although the calculations for a drainage study are specified in the

County's 2003 Hydrology Manual, there are ample opportunities for the operator to significantly influence the final result thru the numerical value of the run-off coefficient. Since Q varies directly as the run-off coefficient, a 20% change in one results in a 20% change in the other. In Table 3-1 Runoff Coefficients for Urban Areas in Report Version #2: Medium Density Residential Q=701 cfs for a 10' x 6.5' drainage unit; Report Version #3: Low Density Residential Q=540 cfs is a 23% reduction to a 7' x 6' drainage unit.

Further review of the Drainage Study reveals that a "new" Land Use Element was used in the calculation of the run-off coefficient: "Roads/Parking". Roads/Parking is not listed in Table 3-1 of authorized LUEs from the Co Manual. The consultant identified 52.5 acres of Roads/Parking in this 396 acre drainage basin ... over 13% and he assigned it the highest possible run-off coefficient: 0.9! It appears that the author of this report has used unauthorized Land Use Elements to artificially increase the run-off. This report appears biased in order to justify a new culvert.

To support the theory that the report has been inappropriately biased I reviewed the drainage study for TM5343, the Chicken Ranch. Closely located, the drainage basin is similar in size (247 ac vs 396 ac), identical residential character. The chicken ranch Existing Condition Drainage Study used Land Use Element Low Density Residential (1 and 2 DU/acre) to calculate the run-off coefficient as prescribed by the Co Manual. There were no "Roads/Parking" calculations used in the chicken ranch study.

Should engineers and applicants be able to "cherry-pick" what Land Use Elements to include or not include in a drainage study? Or should they be required to conform to the given LUEs per the Co Hydrology Manual?

FITCHETT had e-mailed Dion McMicheaux of the County some questions. The first drainage study was done in January 2010, the second in March 2011, and the third in August 2011. Study 1 stated that the existing culvert capacity was 425 cfs. In Study 2 the existing capacity was stated as 295 cfs. How do you calculate 425 cfs and why was it wrong? How did you calculate 295 cfs and why did the culvert capacity change from 295 to 425 cfs?

The project designer from Rick Engineering was Engineer John Goddard with Roberta Cronquist. They stated that the initial report from 2010 used the same methodology as the subsequent one. In the initial report it was not clarified that the low part of the road was not described as being able to be overtopped. Therefore, the Program did not recognize that the road was being overtopped. The capacity volume refers to the capacity without overtopping the road. The capacity of the culvert is based only on culvert geometry. The 100 year discharge is 540 cfs which is greater than the size of the culvert. The revised report includes all calculations. PHILLIPS asked as you increase water elevation above the road after the culvert is full, does the depth increase the flow through the culvert due to increased pressure? They responded, yes, that as you increase the depth you get more head and pressure.

FITCHETT states that the purpose of the drainage study was to calculate a flow rate so large that water could not pass through it and had to top road. You can change the runoff coefficient (given in Table in study) to change the Q. Runoff coefficients used were for Medium Density Residential which is not the residence character and when we pointed it out they changed it to Low Density Residential showed a 23 % reduction. They used the Land Use Element (LUE) . Was this evaluated by walk through and drive through?

They stated that they used aerial photography and a planimeter to calculate the areas of roofs, roads and driveways.

FITCHETT chose the Chicken Ranch drainage study for comparison. Why didn't they use roads and parking in that study? Should there be a standard set of rules for drainage studies? PHILLIPS stated that the point that they are making is the assumption that the density assumes the roads and the impervious surfaces. This report ultimately has a 13 % error since it included roads and surfaces where the other study didn't. When these studies are done for an applicant of a developer they try to make the flows look as small as possible but now for the County they are trying to make them as large as possible. Where do we draw the line?

Mohamad stated that because of the scrutiny that this project is drawing that Rick Engineering staff went to the site to view what the existing conditions are. The hydrology manual says this is the watershed whereas Rick did a lot more work than that so it may not be consistent with other studies but it does not make it inaccurate. It may be on the conservative side but it does not eliminate the need for the project. PHILLIPS stated that if the assumption today does not include the imperviousness of the roads and parking then the manual needs to be re-done. Each of these basins has a whole series of retention basins where people have dammed the flow and impounded the flow. The characteristics of the Mt Helix have changed from a soils standpoint. This area is now almost totally covered with plants and trees that break up the soil.

From the Rick Engineering report they refer to the culvert overtopping "as it occurs today." No overflowing occurs today. Inconsistencies! This whole area is intensely landscaped in this basin and there are little and large retention basins that haven't been considered. Do we want a report that is accurate? YES! The question is, "Should this system that we are using, The County Hydrology Manual, be changed so that it considers changing some of the variables based on if it is a developer or a County requesting it?"

FITCHETT **moves** that the Calavo Drive Drainage Study fails to conform to the requirements of the County 2003 Hydrology Manual. The study should be corrected and the resulting 100 year flow rate should be used to resize a new culvert. Additionally, the Planning Group empowers the subcommittee to review and approve the modified study with the newly determined parameters. (Manning seconds). **VOTE: 10-0-1 to approve.** Tierney abstains.

Mohammed added that having something with a little factor of safety is better. The cost of the larger pipe is minimal. He agrees they need to look at the manual to make sure they are consistent.

- b. P10-044: Proposal to modify the Mt. Helix wireless telecommunications project which was approved by this Planning Group on March 15, 2011. Modifications include shifting faux tree and boulder antenna locations and adding a new faux boulder antenna. Location is on an existing flat graded area below the gated access road immediately east of the Mt. Helix Park.

Marioncelli, representing Plancom Inc., presents. He stated that they need to make modifications to the plans since our initial meeting on March 15, 2011. These changes were in response to neighbors near the project site who commented on the plans at that meeting. They distributed revised plans (marked as revised 8-11-11 and 8-24-11).

FITCHETT reports everything is as stated and **moves** to approve the modifications. (Henderson seconded). **VOTE: 10-0-1 to approve.** Tierney abstains.

- c. Otay Sewer Line Replacement Project: Request to remove one tree of a group of large mature cottonwood trees. The tree is located in Otay's easement west of the sewer manhole structure on the west side of the McDonald's restaurant, east of Avocado Blvd and south of Calle Verde.

Ron Ripperger, Engineering Manager of Otay Water District, says they are 3-4 weeks away from advertising their sewage project. He has met with PHILLIPS about this issue but is here tonight asking for us to approve their removal of a cottonwood tree in the shopping center. The proposed 8" sewer main will require removal of the tree which is in the Otay Water District easement. An arborist will be on-site to mitigate any impact to the tree and adjacent tree roots. They will remove the tree outside the nesting window for migratory birds (typically from September 15th to February 15th). They will grind the tree and will use as mulch throughout the parking center. The Shopping Center wants letter from us saying we approve their removal of the tree in the easement. PHILLIPS concurs with need to remove the identified tree and **ONLY** that tree and **moves** to approve the request to remove tree in conjunction with the sewer project. (Myers seconds).

VOTE: 10-0-1 to approve. Tierney abstains.

6. LAND USE

- a. AD11-026: **DELETED** (Project withdrawn by applicant)

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Park Land Dedication Ordinance (PLDO) Project Priority List and Recreation Programming Priority List: Request from Parks & Rec. Dept. to review/update the lists. Current PLDO priorities: (1) Improve Estrella Park (2) Remove non-native vegetation from Damon Lane Nature Park (3) Add restroom facilities at Fury Lane Children's Park.

PHILLIPS presents. This issue entails funding for Estrella Park for the natural design of the site with an exercise loop and improvement of the pond so that it is more of a feature than a detriment. We have the design and funds to build it but BOS Jacob won't support the project unless there is an entity to maintain it. That entity becomes liable for any injury, etc. Currently there is a little covered bulletin board. There are no Parks to serve the 2000 apartment units in Casa De Oro area so we need to persevere and continue to advocate for it. County Parks has to maintain the site as it is so why can't they maintain the proposed designed Park? As far as Damon Lane, they should have Cuyamaca College students work on Damon Lane Nature Park and remove the exotics. Don't know what is holding up restroom facilities at Fury Lane Children's Park. Parks is very supportive of it. There is a port-a-potty in the area. PHILLIPS **moves** to support the priority list as it stands. (Forthun seconded). Art Patoff who lives by Damon Lane Park stated that 2.5 years ago County Parks put out a notice to get rid of dead growth followed by non-natives. CA Conservation Corps spent over 6 months time working on it. After they finished, Art wrote a letter to the Supervisor complementing Parks for the work done. A sizeable area of arundo still remains. All that time and effort went to naught because it is overgrown again. There was a fire in the Park in June 2008 so the possibility of fire occurring again is high. The Parks Department needs to get creative. Working with the Administration at Cuyamaca College and working with students as part of coursework might be useful. There are coveys of

quail using the Park area and open space for habitat. There have been 3 meetings by Sup. Jacobs concerning mis-use of the Park. **VOTE: 10-0-1 to approve.** Tierney abstained.

8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – None

9. ADJOURNMENT at 8:41 PM

Submitted by: Jösan Feathers